MURPHY, F. M.—Spiders from Malaysia including *Liphistius desultor* (photographed by M. W. F. Tweedie) and its tunnel-web nest showing the door open, then shut; *L. murphyorum* and *L. malayanni*.

NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL—A stand containing numbers of photographs plus text, explaining the problems caused by the break-up of the Nature Conservancy Council. Photographs of Rainham and other Thames marshes were shown, bringing attention to the threats posed by the possible development of the marshland habitats.

SHORT COMMUNICATION

***Trigona*-mimicking hoverflies (Diptera: Syrphidae) in the Amazonian rainforest?**—A lot of examples are known of flies mimicking bees (e.g. Grove & Ghosh, 1914; Buchman & Buchman, 1981). However, observations of flies mimicking the large tropical bee genus *Trigona* have to my knowledge never been published before.

The observations reported here were made in the tropical lowland rainforest on the flooded varzea forest at Añangu, Rio Napo, Yasuni National Park, Ecuador (00° 32′ S, 76° 26′ W) about 300 m above sea level, April 1986. The bee fauna of the site has been described in Borchsenius & Olesen (1990), Olesen (1988, 1989) and Olesen & Balslev (1990).

Two Syrphidae spp.—a thick shining one, *Ornidia obesa* (F.), and a black slender one, *Baccha* sp.—were observed to consume pollen from *Piper* sp. and *Potomorphe peltata* (L.) (Piperaceae). These are both shrubs in secondary growth in light gaps in lowland rainforest. The flies visited the flowering inflorescences together with other insect species, beetles, bees and drosophilids. However, pollen-collecting *Trigona* individuals were very numerous. The thin *Baccha* sp. looked especially like the trigonas in size, shape, colour and flight behaviour. I suggest that the presence of both *Baccha* and *Trigona* on the same food plant indicates Batesian mimicry, i.e. a less frequent harmless species (*Baccha*) imitates a frequent harmful one (*Trigona*) thus reducing, for example bird predation.

My thanks to Francis Gilbert for information on mimicry and to Ernst Torp who identified the syrphids.—Jens Mogens Olesen, Department of Genetics and Ecology, University of Aarhus, Ny Munkegade, Building 550, DK-8000 Aarhus C, Denmark.

REFERENCES

Borchsenius, F. & Olesen, J. M. 1990. The Amazonian root holoparasite *Lophophytum mirabile* (Balanophoraceae) and its insect visitors. *J. Trop. Ecol.* **6**: 501–505.

Buchman, S. L. & Buchman, M. D. 1981. Anthecology of *Mouriri myrtilloides* (Melastomataceae, Memecyleae), an oil flower in Panama. *Biotropica* **13**: 7–24.

Grove, A. J. & Ghosh, C. C. 1914. The life history of *Psylla isitis*. *Mem. Dept Agric. India, Ser. Ent.* **4**: 329–357.

Olesen, J. M. 1988. Nest structure of a *Euglossa* sp. nov. in a fruit of *Theobroma subincanum* from Ecuadorean Amazonas. *Acta Amazonica* **18**: 327–330.

Olesen, J. M. 1989. Behaviour and nest structure of the Amazonian *Bombus transversalis* in Ecuador. *J. Trop. Ecol.* **5**: 243–246.

Olesen, J. M. & Balslev, H. 1990. Flower biology and pollinators of the Amazonian monoecious palm, *Geonoma macrostachys*: a case of intraspecific Batesian mimicry. *Principes* **34**: 181–190.